

M-22: Future Reconstruction Along Crystal Lake

Context

This stretch of roadway is located from Southshore Drive to Crystal Driver along the western edge of Crystal Lake in Benzie County. The landscape includes a mixture of wooded areas and upscale homes.

Purpose and Description

The project involves reconstructing the roadway which is in poor condition. Improvements include crown correction, drainage, crushing and shaping of the existing roadway with a section of mill and fill and the widening of paved shoulders to 5 feet where possible.



Public Engagement

Two formal meetings and several informal site meetings were held to discuss the impacts of the project with individual residences. The concentration of the discussions were centered in a 2-mile stretch where homes are built adjacent to the ROW line. Resident concerns were considered and MDOT was able to modify the fix in this 2-mile stretch to resolve the concerns of the residents. Drainage issues were resolved by adding extensive trench drains through-out this section of roadway. Design exceptions were also required for this modified design.



Challenges

Challenges involved included the need to avoid the removal of trees along the trunkline, as well as the need to grade back the existing side slopes that exist directly adjacent to the roadway shoulders. An additional challenge was to design for drainage in a 2-mile stretch of roadway where many homes along the lake were built immediately adjacent to MDOT's 66-foot ROW line. Many of the home owners have extensive landscaping in the ROW directly adjacent to the roadway.

Context Sensitive Solutions Approach

Given the sensitivity in the area, conventional construction methods were modified for this project. The modified design subjected MDOT to utility conflicts. Many private utilities exist in the 2-mile stretch where extensive trench drains were added. Originally, construction was scheduled for the early spring to avoid the tourism season and avoid disruption to homeowners, many of whom winter elsewhere. However, with the utilities becoming a concern, it was decided and relayed at the second open house meeting that MDOT would construct in July. Contrary to MDOT's original plan, it was explained that we wanted the help of the residents during construction to identify any known utility conflicts to avoid any utility disruption. We also explained that we did not want to accidentally cut off a utility and not know about it until months later when the homeowner arrived at their summer home.

Outcome

Construction began in July 2005. The residents in the area appreciated the one on one involvement and input to the project. The residents now seem to understand what is involved in the design of a project, are taking some ownership, and appreciate MDOT's effort to involve them in the process.

Funding

The \$2.4 million project is part of North Region's annual Road Reconstruction budget.

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